

THE OLD BUCKBOARD

The buckboard was a lighter wagon, and could be drawn over the ground much faster than the ordinary one. Either one or two teams were used according to the size of the load. It was later used to haul supplies to and from the mines, mills and ranches. Seats could be swung across the wagon to accommodate passengers. Mr. Waters drove one of these wagons to the Rob Roy mine north of Beaver from Milford or Frisco with supplies and passengers.

Mr. Waters has seen transportation in its progression from the old covered wagon drawn by oxen, mules and horses, to the train, the automobile, and the plane. His memory is keen and his eyes twinkled as he told us some of the stories of the old freighting days.—*Asenth C. Pool.*

ARNOLD D. MILLER

Arnold D. Miller, born March 2, 1852, came to Utah with his parents, Captain Henry W. and Elmira Pond Miller, in 1852. His first home was in Farmington but in the early sixties the family moved to St. George, where Arnold grew to manhood. He began freighting and railroading when a very young man.

As a freighter he delivered the machinery and building material for the first quartz mine at Pioche, Nevada. While working for the railroad he completed many grading contracts for the D. & R. G., the Santa Fe, and the Atlantic & Pacific railroads. He graded the grounds for the depots at Canon City and Grand Junction, Colorado.

In 1883 Mr. Miller started north to engage in construction work for the Canadian Pacific but found that he could be as successful in freighting from Corinne and Kelton to Butte, Montana. So for some time he engaged in this work. On one of his trips he met the late A. C. McCune who offered him a partnership in a company employed to freight cordwood to the smelters at Anaconda. Quoting from his journal, "I weighed the matter carefully and decided it would throw my family too far away from the church, and that meant more to me than money." As it was, his work took him away from his family a great deal, for he freighted as far south as Albuquerque, New Mexico. So taking his family with him he moved to the upper Snake River valley, known as Parker, Idaho. Here Mr. Miller took an active part in the building of the town as well as helping in the development of the irrigation system. His experience as a freighter and railroader prepared him for the rugged frontier life where he became a leader in both religious and civil life.—*Mary Miller Stanford.*

STAGE COACH DAYS

Mention of the old Stage Coach brings memories to most living pioneers of the west. The old Concord Stage is, perhaps, best remembered. It is described as a grand swinging, swaying vehicle, an imposing cradle on wheels hung on braces instead of spring, drawn by six or eight handsome horses and it fairly flew over the ground.

The first transcontinental stage line and probably the longest continuous run ever operated, was the Butterfield Southern Overland Mail Stages. Its route covered 2,759 miles from St. Louis to San Francisco, over a southern route, by way of Texas, Yuma, Los Angeles. Its first coaches started simultaneously from St. Louis and San Francisco, September,

1858. Each was greeted with a mighty ovation at the journey's end. The equipment of this company consisted of 100 Concord Stages, 500 mules, 700 men including 150 drivers. It began as a monthly stage, but was soon made a six day event. The deadly desert through which half the route lay, the sandstorm, the terribleness of thirst, the unfriendly Indian tribes, and its vast length made it a great undertaking, so the name of John Butterfield is always mentioned among those who helped to win the west.

Between St. Joseph and Great Salt Lake were three centers where comforts were procurable, Forts Kearney, Laramie and Bridger, but passengers were hurried on. The mails might easily have been moved from one terminal to the other in ten days of fair weather, but the schedule of twenty-one days was adhered to rigorously lest the people become accustomed to the faster record and regard the boon as a right. Guns were deemed indispensable for, "For the moment of leaving St. Joseph, to the time of reaching Placerville or Sacramento, the pistol would never be absent from a man's right side. Remember it is handier there than on the other side. Nor should the bowie knife be absent from his left. Contingencies with Indians and others may happen, when the difference of a second saves a life." The old traveler was advised to practice shooting from the hip, in order to get the drop on the enemy.

Burton states that the fare to the "City of the Saints" was \$175 with extra charge of \$1 per pound for luggage exceeding twenty-five pounds. The Concord Coach that drew up before the hotel was scrutinized carefully. Evidently it was built for safety, lightness, and strength. The well-seasoned oak of its composition indicating why it came from coachwrights in New Hampshire. The wheels stood far apart to avert capsizing; and the polished steel tires witnessed the hard country traveled in. The bed of the coach was cleverly and securely supported by iron bands which rested on leather through-braces to ease the jumps and bumps. The driver occupied an elevated seat with a guard or passenger by his side. Inside were three reversible seats which, when turned, made a tolerable bed, except when excessive mail bags interfered. However an accommodating driver would stow the second class mail on the running gear beneath the wagon bed, subjecting it to all the vicissitudes of dust, water and mud.

The gaily colored red or green vehicle was sometimes pulled by half-wild mules which, to mention their virtues only, are sureness of foot, sagacity in finding the way, and for capability in foraging a living, excelled other animals.

HOLLADAY'S OVERLAND STAGE LINE

A Samuel Bowles of the *Springfield Republican*, Massachusetts, whose journalistic ability enabled him to appreciate and further illuminate this prodigious achievement in western transportation, wrote the following:

"The great Overland Stage Line, by which we are traveling, was originated by Mr. William H. Russell of New York and carried on for a year or two by himself and partners, under the name of Russell, Majors & Waddell. They failed, however, and some three years ago it passed into the hands of their chief creditor, Mr. Ben Holladay, an energetic Misourian, who had been a successful contractor for the government and for great corporations on the Plains and the Pacific. He has since continued

the line, improving, extending and enlarging it until it is now, *perhaps the greatest enterprises owned and controlled by one man, which exists in the country, if not in the world.* His line of stages commence at Atchison, on the Missouri River: its first section extends across the great Plains to Denver, six hundred and fifty miles; from here it goes on six hundred miles more to Salt Lake City, along the base of and through the Rocky Mountains at Bridger's Pass. From there to Nevada and California, about seven hundred and fifty miles farther, the stage line is owned by an eastern company, and is under the management of Wells, Fargo & Co., the express agents. All this is a daily line, and the coaches used are of the best stage pattern, well known in New England as the 'Concord Coach.' From Salt Lake Mr. Holladay runs a tri-weekly coach line north and west nine hundred and fifty miles through Idaho to the Dalles on the Columbia River in Northern Oregon, and branching off at Fort Hall, also a tri-weekly line to Virginia City in Montana, four hundred miles more. From Denver too, he has a subsidiary line into mountain centers of Central City and Nevada, about forty miles. Over all these routes he carries the mail, and is in the receipt for this service of six hundred and fifty thousand dollars per annum from the government. His whole extent of staging and mail contracts—not counting, of course, that under Wells, Fargo & Co., from Salt Lake west, is two thousand, seven hundred and sixty miles; to conduct which he owns some six thousand horses and mules and about two hundred and sixty coaches. . . . During the last year of unusually enormous prices for everything and extensive and repeated Indian raids, Mr. Holladay has probably lost money by his stages. The previous year was one of prosperity and the next is likely to be. But with so immense a machine, exposed to so many chances and uncertainties, the returns must always be doubtful. Only a great man would assume such obstacles as are constantly presented; and the regularity, the promptness and the uniform high state of the entire service, in general and particular, make of the whole a matter of real wonder, and an occasion of great credit to Mr. Holladay. It is very natural that he should be unpopular along his route, and be denounced as a monopolist taking advantage of his monopoly to extort high prices and give small accommodation; this is the universal experience of such great enterprises in a new country." What other man could perform this difficult service so satisfactorily?

This feature character in Western transportation, reputed to be one of the most wealthy men in America, say five millions, maintained palatial homes on the Hudson, in proximity to New York City, and at Washington, D. C. "Mr. Holladay visits his Overland Line about twice a year, and when he does, passes over it with a rapidity and a disregard of expense and rules, characteristics of his irrepressible nature. . . . He caused himself to be driven from Salt Lake to Atchison, twelve hundred and twenty miles, in six and one-half days, and was only twelve days and two hours from San Francisco to Atchison. The trip cost him probably twenty thousand dollars in wear and tear of coaches and injury to and loss of horses by the rapid driving."

Rusling mentions that this tall, thin magnate of forty-five, manifested largeness of grasp and quickness of perception, that he possessed "indifferent health but indomitable will, fiery and irascible when crossed and a Westerner all through. Apparently he carried his vast business very jauntily, without much thought or care. . . ." Henry Villard was negatively

impressed, describing Holladay as "A genuine specimen of the successful Western pioneer of former days, illiterate, coarse, pretentious, boastful, false, and cunning."

Though space forbids, it is impossible to resist a humoristic touch from the pen of Mark Twain, the story of an American youth who was traveling in the Holy Land. The reverent guide, thinking to impress the youth with the greatness of Moses, the leader and law-giver of Israel, commented:

"Jack, from this spot where we stand, to Egypt, stretches a fearful desert three hundred miles in extent—and across that desert that wonderful man brought the children of Israel! guiding them with unflinching sagacity for forty years over the sandy desolation and among the obstructing rocks and hills, and landed them at last, safe and sound, within sight of this very spot. . . . It was a wonderful thing to do, Jack. Think of it!"

"Forty years? Only three hundred miles?" replied Jack. "Humph! Ben Holladay would have fetched them through in thirty-six hours."—*Dr. Neff's Manuscript.*

RECOLLECTIONS

Seeing an old stage brought to mind recollections Captain J. Lee Humfreville of the United States Cavalry in old frontier times gave—as late as 1897 it was—of the Overland stages of the west and what truckmen—the actual drivers and wagon boys were so often already then called—had to make preparations against, for the safety of their passengers and express most of all, when they'd ride.

"Most typical of all the western stages, and so of the early western trucking—and express—life of the times," he put it succinctly, for the benefit of who might set it down and preserve to other years, "was the actual Overland stage line, started about 1858, so far as can be learned today.

The authorities at Washington, it is remembered, had been urgently appealed to for an overland mail service to the Pacific coast and this stage line was the result. The line started from St. Joseph, Mo., and ran to Sacramento, Calif., a distance of nearly 2,000 miles. About 25 days were required to make the trip. At first the service was semi-monthly, then weekly, then semi-weekly, then tri-weekly, and after coming under the famous Bob Holliday's management it was made daily.

"The stages," and mark you, who may see the old stage coaches employed now by the circuses and other traveling hippodromes for the savage encounters with the robber red men, you may find the stamp of the producers still somewhere on the frame, "were all light vehicles, made in Concord, N. H., and were drawn by four, six, or eight good horses or mules. Each stage had a boot in front and rear for baggage, extra fast and precious freight, and mail; the express and mail matter being always carried in the front boot, under the foot of the driver. From nine to twelve persons could be accommodated in the inside, while four could ride outside on the deck, and two with the driver.

"The stations were usually from five to ten miles apart. A team running from one station to another with its stage, constituted its daily work. At each station a number of men were kept to guard the place, take care of the animals, and assist in hitching and unhitching the teams on their

arrival. The stages ran on schedule time, and the people at the stations knew about when to expect them, and had everything in readiness to prevent delay and enable them to change horses with the utmost celerity. The driver rarely left his box while the change was being made, but when all was ready the reins were passed quickly to him, a start was made at once, and the horses were forced to their utmost until the next station was reached, when the same scene of hurried change was re-enacted.

"The stages ran night and day, and they sometimes covered a hundred miles in 24 hours, which in these days of modern travel, does not seem a long distance, but in those days, with a heavily loaded stage, hindered by frequent and unavoidable delays, bad roads through mountain passes, swollen streams and other obstacles, it was regarded as extraordinary service.

"The ordinary day's work of a driver covered a distance of from fifty to sixty miles; and in making this journey from five to six teams were used. He went up one day and came down the next. His drive was made continuously, whether by day or by night, and he was required to reach his destination as nearly on schedule time as possible.

"A good stage-driver was not only an expert reinsman, but also a man of courage, coolness and judgment. The road was unbroken, in places very rough, with abrupt turns and deep gullies and washouts.

"In winter, when the snows were deep, the teams would frequently become exhausted, or the driver would lose his way. Then the stage would be abandoned, and the driver and as many of his passengers as could mount the animals would go to the nearest station; but when lost, they would, following the trail, return to the station whence they came.

"When the snow was very blinding, those on foot were instructed by the driver to take hold of an animal's tail and hold on until they arrived at the station. On one occasion, in one of those blinding snow storms, when going through Bridger's Pass, the horses arrived at the foot of a hill in exhausted condition. The driver requested the passengers to get out of the stage and walk to the top of the hill. This they refused to do. Before they realized what had happened, the driver had left the box, unhitched the team, and mounting one horse, and leading the others, was on his way to the last station, leaving the coach and passengers in the snow. When they realized their situation, there was consternation among them!

"The driver, on arriving at the station, reported what had taken place, whereupon the men hitched up twelve fresh animals and brought the passengers in. The latter could not have returned alone, as the blizzard was so blinding. It sometimes happened that these stages became lost in a blizzard; remaining out twenty-four or thirty-six hours before they were able to proceed."

"The arrival of the stagecoach at military posts, trading posts and ranches, was a matter of great moment, and much excitement usually prevailed while the team was being changed. The journey across the country was very exhausting, as the passengers could only sleep while sitting very close together and in cramped positions.

"As was to be expected, the stages were great prey for the Indians and for robbers, who were known in that country as 'road-agents.' After capturing the stage and killing its occupants, the Indians would secure the arms, clothing and animals of their victims and would make off;

whereas the road-agents, after holding up the stage, robbing the passengers of their valuables, and securing as much express matter as they could manage, permitted the looted stage to resume its journey.

"The Stations were usually situated in isolated places, and were exposed to attacks from the Indians, who frequently made raids on them, securing all the animals, and thus seriously crippling the service. The raids were of frequent occurrence and had much to do with hastening the demand for modern means of travel.

"At first the stages were accompanied by out-riders, or, as they were sometimes termed, 'whippers-in'. These men simply rode a horse alongside the team, and vigorously whipped the leaders, to urge them to their greatest speed. They were of great service in case of attack from Indians or road-agents, and, being heavily armed, and always well-mounted, could do much to defend the stage!

"When the Mormons first crossed the plains in 1847, they, in a manner, paved the way for the Overland Stage route. They passed up the Platte river as far as the present town of Julesburg, Colo."—*Deseret News*, December, 1926.

The following story was written by George C. Streeter, commonly known as "Dad Streeter" of Ogden, Utah. It is his own experience as a stage coach driver in Nebraska. Mr. Streeter came to Ogden in 1889 and has lived there ever since.

I had made only one trip to Deadwood with the mule team when one of the stage drivers quit. That gave me the job I had been waiting for, which consisted of driving from four to eight horses hitched to a Concord coach. The size of the stage and the number of horses used depended on how many passengers were leaving Sidney, Neb., which was the starting point. Some of the rigs could carry 20 passengers and their baggage. Our average time was 10 miles per hour, over all kinds of roads—except good ones. All the driver was required to do was to drive. The hitching and unhitching was done by flunkies, who were kept at the stage stations along the route for that purpose.

We could drive 20 miles, change horses, drive 20 more miles, change horses again and eat our dinner; then reverse the process on the return route. Eighty miles was a day's drive. Our orders were:

"Do not allow anyone, except an officer of the law or of the company, to ride on the boot with you. Make each station on time or expect to get fired. If a horse drops by the way cut the tugs and drive over him, sending a man back from the next station for the harness." We were sometimes changed from one division to another in order to break the monotony.

One day I had only one passenger, a large fat man, who became violently seasick from the swaying of the coach. Thinking the fresh air might make him feel better, I invited him to ride on top of the stage with me, although it was against the rules. All went well until we reached Break Neck Hill, which was a long, steep grade going down to the White River near Fort Robinson. As there was snow on the ground I knew my brakes would not do any good, so I got out to put the rough-lock on, and to my horror it wasn't there. It had probably been taken out for repairs and not put back on. So I took the desperate chance of going down the hill without a brake. My wheelers although a large, powerful team, were not able to hold the heavy rig, so we found ourselves gaining speed every second. I

was lashing the leaders with all my might to keep them out of the way, realizing that if the wheelers became tangled in the leaders' stretchers that would cause a pile up that would kill both the passenger and myself. My passenger, not realizing the danger, and thinking I was trying to scare him, made a grab for the lines. In self-defense I threw them on the horses' backs. Then he tried to take the whip away from me, but that was useless, although he was the larger and the stouter, because it took too much of his time and energy to keep from falling off the seat.

We reached the bottom of the hill in safety, but right at the bottom was a small stream that was only partly frozen over, so when the front wheels went in, instead of rolling up over the ice they went under and held fast. The abrupt stop caused us both to sail through the air for about fifty feet. We landed without any serious injury. The horses broke loose from the stage and ran into a clump of bushes. When the shock had subsided the willows straightened up, lifting the lead team off the ground. I got out my ax, which we always carried for emergencies, chopped down the willows, got the team out, hitched on the rig again, and by driving at a good run the balance of the way, reached the station on time.

The manager of the line, Mr. Crabtree, was there. My passenger immediately told him about my reckless driving, swearing he would never ride over that line again if he didn't fire that crazy kid who drove him in. The boss looked at him, and said: "You goggle-eyed — you can ride or walk, but that kid is the best driver I've got." That winter was exceptionally cold and stormy, and it was almost impossible to make the horses face some of the blizzards that came howling down from the north. I stayed with my job until spring then quit and started south for a warmer climate. My record showing that I had driven almost a year without being late or having a wreck that the horses couldn't drag in.—*Isabelle E. K. Wilson, Weber Co.*

THE OLD WEBER STAGE AND PONY EXPRESS STATION

In the summer of 1853 the first stone was placed for the building which was later to become famous as the Weber Stage and Pony Express Station. Located five miles north of Coalville at the mouth of Echo Canyon, it is thought to be the first erected in that locality. In December, 1931, Leo Young, contractor, removed the last stone and Weber Station is now only a memory. Its twenty-six inch walls were considered unsafe to remain longer. The walls, although weakened by the jarring of heavy trains, concealed secrets unknown to the owners for over sixty years. At the time the building was erected five pockets were left in the walls to conceal valuables. By replacing a stone and hanging a picture over the spot the pockets substituted for a safe. So well did they perform their duties that one pocket was not discovered until the building was being torn down. Examination of the contents showed them to be: one \$5 gold piece, dated 1847; a few pieces of small change, an old letter from a son and daughter to their "Dear Parents," dated 1873; a pair of gold glasses, a very light pony express rider's gun case and a parchment such as the pony express mail first used, written from an eastern girl to her pony express rider sweetheart. The parchment and letter can be read plainly.

Weber Stage and Pony Express Station history is unique, nestling as it did in the mouth of Echo canyon, it was passed by all travelers. The

trail has many marked and unmarked graves. The identity of the majority of the dead is unknown.

Old George Bromley, trapper and prospector, who has spent his life in this district, being born in the Weber Station seventy years ago, is more qualified to give a clear account of the history of this station than any man alive today. Although only a child at the time the stages and pony express were making history, he still recalls names and facts that have been overlooked by historians and unknown to others than the ones directly connected with the station. His account of the shooting of George Gilchrist, hostler for the station, by Pete McMannis, stage driver, over the changing of a lame horse, caused a smile to light his old face. He said: "And it took mother six weeks to bring him to life." Evidently the hostler's job was a thankless one, and his duties many, which made him enemies that later proved his undoing. The "Racket" gang also operated at this station from its beginning. Renegades stole the stage and pony express ponies. Upon the posting of a notice of the amount of money offered for the return of the horses, the thieves promptly returned them to the station and collected the reward. The management complained and Slade—no doubt, Captain Jack Slade, the most famous station agent connected with the old stage coach days—was sent in, causing a sudden stop to collecting rewards. As Bromley explained Slade's methods: "They were rather rough, but effective." Slade's picked men would ride into one of the buildings. No saddles or bridles were removed from their mounts. The men slept on the dirt floor, leaving one rider as guard. What happened after a capture can easily be told from the large number of unmarked graves, which hold men who rode out in the night on raids, as well as men who helped stamp out the thieving. Bromley relates the account of the killing of a driver known as Stagg by Patsy Coughlin. Patsy Coughlin being trapped in an old log building by the posse, refused to surrender. As the posse closed in Patsy fired through the "chinking" in the old building, instantly killing Stagg. The cleaning up of horse thieves then went on in earnest. Pete McMannis, coming from Evanston, Wyoming, to Salt Lake City, was given a man, who had stolen some horses, and told to deliver this man at Weber Station. Upon nearing the station his prisoner made a break for liberty. McMannis, unable to drop his lines and give chase, promptly shot his man, loaded him into the stage and delivered him as per schedule. The Weber Station, when erected was covered with a dirt roof, used oiled paper for windows and had as a lighting system the old tallow candle. It served as a supply house, store, dance hall, church, schoolhouse and often as a hospital. After every heavy rain more dirt was needed on the roof. However, it progressed with the years, and at the time Sidney Collins, its present owner, gave the order for its removal, it was in every sense of the word a modern garage and service station. Its roof was covered with redwood shingles, oiled paper windows were changed to glass, heavy sliding doors covered the front. No doubt many weary tourists longing for a few sights of the old west have filled their gasoline tanks at this station and driven away, wondering what had become of the old landmarks they had studied about. Accounts of early pioneers vary as to just who was the first owner of the Weber Station. Some claim the government, others say private parties. This date being a little

early for the government's entrance into Utah, it was no doubt erected by a private party.—*D. Clayton of Coalville, Utah.*

STAGE COACH HOLD-UP IN YELLOWSTONE PARK

My mind wanders back some years ago to a time when making a snowshoe trip from Rexburg, Idaho, to my home in Jackson Hole. I had to pass through Teton Basin. I noticed a lone log cabin and made my way to it. The lone occupant made me welcome, as did the large dog lying before the fireplace. On the wall were two splendid oil paintings, one of a dog called "The Hound's Dream," the other a picture of a cow elk, standing in the deep snow in a gulch, upon the edge of the gulch was a man on snowshoes. It was called "Mutual Surprise." Both pictures were beautifully done, and they made an impression I will never forget for the man, my host was Ed. Harrington who held up and robbed a string of eleven stage coaches within Yellowstone Park. This he did singlehanded and alone without harming a person.



Courtesy S. N. Leek.

The Old Pack Horse

Some time before the holdup I had received a letter from George Eastman asking me to meet him and his party of four and conduct them on a thirty days tour of the park. With Uncle Nick Wilson, noted express rider, driving a light wagon, a heavy wagon for provisions, six head of saddle ponies and other necessary items we met the party at Cinabar. About thirty miles on our way we came to the outlet of Jackson Lake where we saw two men start out from the shore in a dug-out canoe. One of them I recognized as an old acquaintance from Teton Basin. We enjoyed a pleasant thirty-day trip and returned our party to their private

car in West Yellowstone. Then we started home. We had traveled but a few miles when we came to the Lone Star Geyser Basin, a beautiful camping place; near this spot the old trappers trail of long ago passes on its way to Jackson Hole and two of us planned to follow this trail on horseback. After a good night's rest we were up quite early the next morning and were at breakfast when a strange man rode into camp. He rode close to where we were gathered, his piercing eyes seemed to miss nothing and in a voice of authority asked, "Whose camp is this?" I replied that it was mine. He wanted to know if all my men were there. I replied that they were and added, "Why all this interest in our camp?" He said the stages had been held up, and they were searching for the outlaws. I asked, "How many outlaws?" He replied, "Only one was seen but we think there are several more." He then rode away as suddenly as he appeared. Evidently he felt he had no time to waste. I remarked to my companion, "That outlaw knows this region. He knows the only way he can get out of the park is to the south. He knows the old trappers trail and will follow it on foot. I don't wish to follow the trail on horseback with that outlaw on foot ahead, let's stay with the wagons."

A few minutes' travel brought us to the scene of the holdup near a rocky cliff surrounded by dense forest. Eleven stages had been robbed. Although they had passed on, there was a litter of papers, etc., scattered around. The rangers found the robber's track down the old trappers trail, for as he had walked along he had sorted his plunder, taking the money and throwing the containers away.

Time went on. Mr. Harrington, the man in the dug-out canoe, began to show signs of newly acquired wealth. He and his wife went to Denver, always watched. The wife was seen wearing jewelry secured at the holdup. Soon he was arrested and at the trial everything was cleared up. Alone in the canoe, Harrington paddled to the head of Jackson Lake, cached the canoe there, and went on foot into the park, then located his quarry. He did the job alone and in the end died in prison for the offense.—*S. N. Leek, Jackson, Wyoming.*

